

## AGENCY UPDATE

BY TONY SPECTOR

### Summer is here!

I was told that while summer can be a busy time for EMS, it is not-so-busy for the EMSRB. The latter may be true generally, but this year it is proving not to be the case. Staff, board members, and work group members are busy working on several important projects.

One really important project relates to our current e-licensing system; it's going away forever (to the cheers of many). We are excited about implementing a new system that will be purpose-built and by all accounts more intuitive and much more user-friendly. To aid the transition process, we will be taking the current e-licensing system off-line effective July 5, 2016. This means that we will be going to old-school "pen and paper" for initial and renewal applications. The process will include a downloadable PDF form to be completed and then sent to the EMSRB by email, fax, or U.S. Mail.

Our plan is for a turnaround time of one week from receipt of application to issuance of a certification card.

More information regarding the off-line application process, including how to verify certification and education, is forthcoming and will be available on our website. The information also will be sent to ambulance services, regional programs, and education programs. Our goal is to have the new e-licensing system up-and-running by October 2016, i.e., in time for the EMR renewal period.

The off-line process will serve as an excellent test for the EMSRB regarding an aspect of its continuity of government operations plan. All state agencies must have a plan to ensure continuity of operations. In the unlikely event of some catastrophic technology failure, the EMSRB must be able to fulfill its obligations and

mandates. We believe that our off-line process will meet the needs of our EMS partners and stakeholders as well as the agency itself, but the best test will be seeing it in action. After our new e-licensing system is operational, we will have the opportunity to critique the off-line process and make whatever changes are necessary to ensure a more efficient and effective process should a future need ever arise.

As you probably know, the current online application seeks an applicant's address. Minnesota law requires that you provide a residence or business address on your application. This address is referred to your designated address, which means that you designate this address as the address where you can be contacted in connection with your application and your certification.

Let's say you come home, check your mailbox, and find a circular from an EMS equipment vendor and a brochure advertising upcoming continuing education. You say to yourself, "What the [insert expletive]. How did they get my name and address?" Answer: The designated address you provide is public information.

According to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, after a state agency issues a license or a certification, the vast majority of the information contained on that person's application is deemed public information. One notable exception, however, is the social security number; it remains private data and unavailable for disclosure to the public. Minnesota law requires that applicants for occupational licenses and certifications provide their social security number because the Minnesota Department of Revenue can take action on an individual's occupational credentials when income tax delinquencies rise to a certain

(continued on page 2)

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(continued from page 1)

threshold. But absent the social security number, the rest of the information is fair game as public information. Sometimes commercial entities such as product vendors and educational institutions purchase mailing lists from state agencies. This may explain why you received the brochure about the new style of EMS pants.

While junk mail can be annoying, it usually is rather benign. Worst case scenario might be a paper cut. But here's a scenario that you might find a bit more uncomfortable: You respond on a call for service that becomes controversial. Perhaps it involves law enforcement use-of-force. Perhaps the patient is a celebrity. Perhaps your actions become the subject of scrutiny and consequently give rise to a news story. Let's say that a television reporter wishes to interview you about the call for service. The reporter calls your employer and asks to speak with you. As luck would have it, you are not available.

The reporter then asks for your home address and phone number. Your employer plainly tells the reporter that statutes and policies prohibit the employer from disclosing your address or your phone number.

But the reporter is tenacious and wants a story. So the reporter contacts the State of Minnesota and makes a data practices request for the information pertaining to your approved application for certification. The reporter then obtains the designated address listed on your application: your residence address. And as you return from the grocery store, parked in front of your house is a white van with bold graphics that read: "Action News Investigators." You drive on. Next day, there is a knock on your door, and when you open the door, there is a reporter and a photographer ready to ask you a series of unnerving questions.

The point to my story is that your application information can become public. If listing your home address as your designated address is not an issue for you, then so be it. If doing so concerns you, however, perhaps you should consider listing your business (i.e., work) address as your designated address.

Minnesota law also allows you to include an optional non-designated address on your application. The non-designated address is private data that is not disclosed in response to a public data practices request. Some individuals list their business address as their designated address and their home address as their non-designated address. Some individuals choose to list a designated address only, that being the business address. And you need not wait until your next certification cycle; you can change your address at any time.

The new "pen and paper" application has on it places for the designated address and the non-designated address.

Please review Minn. Stat. § 13.41 for more details on the classification of licensing data.

I really hope you find time to enjoy the summer. I also hope you remain safe – both on and off-duty. And as my mom always tells me: "Remember the sunscreen."

**Let's work together to make things happen.**

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EMSRB | 2829 University Avenue Southeast, Suite 310, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414-3222 | (651) 201-2800 | (651) 201-2812 (f)

# THE EMSRB ALERT

## EMS MEDICAL DIRECTOR OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE COURSE



Emergency Medical Services  
Regulatory Board

The Medical Directors Standing Advisory Committee of the EMSRB in partnership with the Minnesota EMS Medical Directors Association presents:

### EMS Medical Director Operational Guidance Course *Strategies for Successful Rural EMS Medical Direction*

September 9, 2016, from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the Annual EMS Medical Directors Conference  
Arrowwood Resort, Alexandria Minnesota

## EMS EVENTS

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|--|--|---|
| ♦ <b>EMS Memorial Bike Ride</b><br>June 26, 2016<br>Memorial Ceremony - 3:30 p.m.<br>Woodbury, MN                    | ♦ <b>EMS Medical Director's Conference</b><br>(EMS Medical Director's Assn)<br>September 9 -11, 2016<br>Arrowwood Resort, Alexandria | ♦ <b>Pulse Check 2016</b><br>(Allina Health)<br>September 22-23, 2016<br>Mystic Lake Casino, Prior Lake |
| ♦ <b>Medical Direction Standing Advisory Committee</b><br>September 8, 2016 - 7 p.m.<br>Arrowwood Resort, Alexandria | ♦ <b>MEMSA</b><br>(Minnesota EMS Association)<br>September 16 -18, 2016<br>Jackpot Junction, Morton, MN                              | ♦ <b>Trauma Tactics</b><br>(Life Link III)<br>October 7-8, 2016,<br>St. Cloud, MN                       |
| ♦ <b>EMSRB Board Meeting</b><br>September 9, 2016 - 9 a.m.<br>Arrowwood Resort, Alexandria                           |  |   |

## BOARD/COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| ♦ <b>EMSRB Board</b><br>10:00 a.m., July 21, 2016<br>Conference Room A<br>4th Floor | ♦ <b>Data Policy Standing Advisory Committee</b><br>1:00 p.m., August 4, 2016<br>EMSRB Offices | ♦ <b>Post Transition Education Workgroup</b><br>10:00 a.m., June 29, 2016<br>EMSRB Offices |
|---|--|--|

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## COOPER/SAMS VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE AWARD PROGRAM

The Cooper/Sams Volunteer Ambulance Award Program forms are being distributed to all ambulance services in June. Information is also available on the EMSRB website.

Please pay attention to the statutory deadlines for application. Applications can be accepted by fax, email or postmarked U.S. Mail.

These are firm deadlines; there are no exceptions to these deadlines.

- ◆ Ambulance services applying for current service credits forms are due by August 1, 2016
- ◆ Individuals applying for payment the Award Claim forms are due by October 1, 2016.

## MNSTAR Access Security

The EMSRB is reminding ambulance services that security of the MNSTAR ambulance run data web-site is the responsibility of the ambulance service and needs regular review. Access to an ambulance service site is gained through persons on the staff roster in MNSTAR that have been approved for access and given a username and password by the ambulance service MNSTAR EMS Service Administrator. The EMS Service

Administrator for the MNSTAR site should regularly review all personnel that have been authorized for access to the site. Regular review of staff will help ensure that only personnel that have current authorization to the MNSTAR site have access to the data that is collected on the site. If you have questions regarding security of your MNSTAR site please contact the EMSRB EMS Specialist assigned to your ambulance service.

## EMS COMPLIANCE CORNER

### EMS Education Program Renewal Information:

According to Minn. Stat. § 144E.285, an education program application for re-approval is due to the EMSRB at least three months prior to the month of expiration. Applications must be complete, including payment, by the end of the month in which the program

renewal application is due to avoid corrective action. If the renewal application is not complete and received by the actual expiration date, it is assumed that the program no longer wish to be an approved education program and the approval will expire. Please visit our website Education Program Renewal for more specific details regarding this process.

## EMS STAFF HERE TO SERVE YOU

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